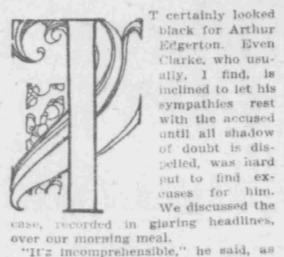


THE MAN WITH THE WATER MIND

BEING THE CHRONICLES OF CARLTON CLARKE, TELEPATHO-DEDUCTIVE SOLVER OF CRIMINAL MYSTERIES.

THE SQUARE TRIANGLE



It certainly looked black for Arthur Edgerton. Even Clarke, who usually, I find, is inclined to let his sympathies rest with the accused until all shadow of doubt is dissipated, was hard put to find excuses for him. We discussed the case, recorded in glaring headlines, over our morning meal.

"It's incomprehensible," he said, as he read the third time the damning details. "His whole life, his success, his approaching marriage, everything cries out against this crime."

"So they did in the case of Eugene Aram," I replied, "and yet Aram protested his innocence. If Edgerton is not guilty, it should be a simple matter for him to account for his whereabouts from 7:20 to 10 last night, but this he refuses to do. I am of the opinion that for once the police have shown commendable energy and nabbed the right man. Can you imagine a more convincing chain of circumstantial evidence?"

"I don't have to imagine. The history of circumstantial evidence contains many a more perfect chain which was only broken when an innocent man had been hanged."

"Then again," he continued, "what do you make of the robbery? If through jealousy Edgerton killed Garner, why should he rifle his pockets, tear out a diamond stud, and wrench the ring off his finger like a common freebooter?"

"That might have been the work of some one else who arrived on the scene after the murderer had fled," I suggested.

"A stronger argument on your side would be that it was done to throw the police off the track. But we argue to no purpose, and I, for one, propose to await the sequel."

It was the old, old story, the fatal triangle, in the demonstration of which tragedy has been the corollary since the world began—two men and one woman.

Arthur Edgerton possessed the three almost priceless talismans to the gates of modern society: youth, good looks, and wealth; and these had won for him the master-key: social position, despite the handicap of antecedents unknown, some said, even doubtful.

Harrison Garner put into the balance against these: wealth, a family name honored for generations, and an unblemished character. Edgerton's brilliancy he offset by unflinching good humor and wholesomeness.

Mazie Morrison, secure in her own little social realm and with no lack of suitors for the hand of its queen, had played one against the other. She had finally silenced the gossips by accepting Edgerton, and then set their tongues wagging faster than ever by receiving both on equal terms, despite the cards and the ring and all the delightful, bothersome preliminaries to matrimony.

Murder Has Been Done.

And then the sequel: Garner found shot through the heart in Edgerton's automobile on a lonely spot on the Lake Shore drive; Edgerton, blood bespattered, behind prison bars, and Mazie Morrison, weeping, inconsolable, distraught, in her pretty boudoir, stunned at the havoc her little hands had wrought in three lives. This was the picture I painted that summer morning at the breakfast table. Later I found the canvas wanted retouching sadly.

Ignoring the futility of the argument, Clarke and I prolonged our discussion of the case in the library over our cigars, where we were interrupted by the sound of carriage wheels. Clarke's dark features lighted with expectancy. I wondered if his remarkable presence told him that the vehicle stopping at our entrance held any connection for us with the tragedy of the night before. Or was I absorbing a portion of his sensitive intelligence?

"Yes, the call was for us. The bell rang and we heard our servant, who at this period chanced to be Jay boy, blandly answering a feminine voice which inquired for Mr. Carlton Clarke.

Our visitor was heavily veiled, and as Clarke stepped forward to offer her a chair, I was able to judge nothing of her personality beyond that she was young and owned a figure, a face, and suggesting through her costume, animal-like lines and curves. Or was it the art of the dressmaker exemplified in a perfectly gowned woman?"

"I am Miss Mazie Morrison, Mr. Clarke," she said sadly, lifting her veil from a face, the beauty of which even the evident traces of tears could not mar, and brushing back her dark, rebellious hair with a dainty little hand, on which sparkled an engagement ring.

"Yes, Miss Morrison, I am glad you have called on me. It is about the Edgerton case, I suppose," replied Clarke, while I discreetly retired behind the portiere of my bedroom door.

"O, yes, Mr. Clarke. You have seen the papers. You know the terrible trouble I am in. It seems that no one can help me, but I heard papa and brother Joe talking about what you did for Richard King and I have come to you. I had a perfectly dreadful time slipping away from home. I am watched by the police, and even by my own family, but I know Arthur did not do that dreadful thing and I simply had to talk with some one who would believe me. You don't think he did it, do you?"

"Miss Morrison, I do not know, but, for your sake, I propose to find out if there is any hope."

"Oh, do, Mr. Clarke, and I will pay you anything I am worth in my own right and they cannot prevent me from giving it all to save Arthur."

"The question of payment, Miss Morrison, is of the smallest consequence.

quence. Services such as mine cannot be ticketed with a price and sold as commodities. I will serve you just as willingly if nothing is said on the financial side. Now, if we are to fight this battle against circumstances, first let us take an account of our resources. I will repeat to you the evidence contained in the newspaper reports, and you are to tell me wherein it tallies with the facts and to give me any further information you can. Are you strong enough for the ordeal?"

Miss Morrison's Story.

"O, yes, Mr. Clarke. I am strong enough for anything if it will prove Arthur innocent."

"Then I will call my confrere, Mr. Sexton, to take notes and we will go over the case in detail."

I was easily found, for though pretending to read, I was taking in the conversation from my position behind the portiere.

"Now then," continued Clarke, "the papers say that Mr. Edgerton called at your apartment building, the Patio, at 7:20 o'clock last night. That he found Garner there and stayed only about ten minutes. That he and Garner left together, entered Edgerton's automobile, and started north. Now what occurred during those ten minutes?"

"Ah, Mr. Clarke, it happened just as the papers say, only they have added so many horrible things that are not so. They say Arthur was insanely jealous of Harrison and that he left me in a rage. He wasn't a bit jealous. He knew Harrison still called on me as an old friend of our family, and he often said he thoroughly approved of it. He knew he had all my love. He was acting strangely last night, but he remarked that he was worrying over some business troubles. He scarcely spoke ten words to me, and when I asked him about an engagement we had for next Thursday evening he could not remember what it was and claimed he had forgotten all about it. I thought that strange, for he never forgets anything. When Mr. Garner rose to go Arthur said he was on his way to see a man on an important business matter in Edgewater, and offered to take Mr. Garner in his machine to his home on Wilson avenue. I remember thinking this was odd, for he never before mentioned business in the evening."

"Had Mr. Edgerton any business troubles?"

"None that I know of. Papa said just the other evening that his factory had orders enough ahead to run it a year."

"Now, Miss Morrison, did you notice anything else strange in his actions?"

"Well, there was one thing, but it can't be of any importance. When he was leaving he rolled a cigarette and I noticed that he rolled it inward. When he makes his own cigarettes he always rolls them outward and he told me once that was the proper way. This was why I noticed it, but I suppose it was nervousness that caused him to change."

"Um—" ejaculated Clarke, meditatively. "Have you seen Mr. Edgerton this morning?"

"No, I was going there after seeing you, but I dread the crowds and the notoriety."

Clarke Has Taken the Case.

"I think I can give you a card which will secure you from annoyance."

"Oh, thank you. Is there anything else?"

"No, Miss Morrison. Tell Mr. Edgerton for me that we may clear him in spite of himself."

"Then you will help?"

"Madam, I have already taken the case."

When she left, Clarke's eyes danced with excitement.

"What do you think of it now?" he asked.

"I can't see a ray of light, can you?" I replied.

"Isn't she a wonderful woman to think of little things like that clear-cut? You and I, Sexton, know something of the obsessions of a cigarette-smoker, and that his prejudices are as inflexible as the laws of the Medes and Persians. I don't know what it means now, but I will. But let's go. I'm anxious to have a look at that auto before it is removed. I suppose the police have poked over it now until there'll be no finding out anything from it."

When we reached the scene of the tragedy we found the machine standing apparently just as the murderer had left it, the front wheels in the ditch and the hind wheels elevated by the grade of the roadway. A dark pool of blood in the tonneau told its own story. The motor was guarded by a solitary policeman, who kept at bay a gaping crowd of curiosity seekers.

Clarke and I had some difficulty with the majesty of the law, but an air of authority and a cigar finally won the day.

"Is the machine just as it was when the body was removed?" queried Clarke.

"Yes, sir. It's not to be touched till the coroner has a look at it." "I would like to give him a dialect, but truth demands that he speaks reasonably good English."

Clarke gave the machine a most critical examination, promising the officer he would leave it just as he found it. He peeped under the hood, tested the spark, noted the supply of gasoline, and noticed the course of a bullet along the leather of the rear seat.

"An automatic," he quietly remarked. "Nothing but a steel-jacketed bullet could go clear through the body of a man and then cut so clean a furrow. There are no signs of a struggle. The polish of that woodwork hasn't a scratch on it, which would't be likely if there had been a fight. Officers, are you sure these levers haven't been touched since the body was found?"

"Yes, sir. I came with the wagon

Asks to Be Locked Up.

When we entered the gloomy corridors of Central station, Clarke at once sought out Inspector Ship, who happened to be in charge, and begged for an interview with Edgerton.

"I'd like to favor you, Mr. Clarke," said the inspector, "although it's very irregular. I can't refer to you as his lawyer, as he has refused to employ one; still I can't forget several little turns you have done for me, and so I'll see if he wants to talk to you."

Here we met a stumbling-block of formidable proportions. Inspector Ship returned with the word that the prisoner absolutely refused to see anyone.

"Then, inspector, I wish you would lock me up in the cage next to Edgerton, and preferably on the side his bunk is on, if that one is empty. You can do that, can't you, and leave me there for an hour? I may be able to interest him through the gratings."

"Well, I guess I can, but it isn't often they come here asking to be locked up. Come on down stairs."

"Better go out and have your luncheon in the meantime, Sexton."

The Detective's Theory.

"I have learned nothing to change my opinion," I replied.

"Well, I have, Sexton, it is my solemn judgment that Edgerton was not in that automobile when the killing was done. It's a simple little thing, but to me it's conclusive. The machine was set on the secondary speed. The gasoline tank was almost empty and the oil-cups dry as a bone. Whoever ran that car was afraid of the high speed, and he had been burning up the engine and squandering the gasoline to make time. When he stopped he left the throttle

TWO MEN WERE LOCKED IN DEADLY EMBRACE

on the second speed, threw off the gear-clutch, applied the emergency brake, and skidded into the ditch on his tires. They are cut through. The engine was not burned out from being left running, for the machine is of a type which disconnects the batteries when the gear clutch is thrown. No expert motorist ever did such a bungling job."

"But in the stress of excitement—" I suggested.

"I never saw excitement cause one of them to forget the high speed, and besides, all this, except the stopping, occurred before the shooting."

"Perhaps Edgerton was a new hand at the game."

"No. On our way back I have been trying to think where I had heard his name before. I just recalled it. He drove his own car in the races at Washington Park last year. I must pay more attention to sports. Really, in our line of business one can't afford to neglect any branch of information. No, we're not going to get off. I want to go down to Central Station. It may be best to have an interview with Edgerton."

"Now," continued Clarke, as we settled back in our seats, "assuming that you have come over from the camp of the enemy, let us count our forces and see wherein our little army of facts is superior to that of the police. First the motive. Jealousy and robbery, say the police, but I never knew of these two impulses to work together. Their case would be stronger with either of these motives alone. Robbery is out of the question, and we have Miss Morrison's word that he was not jealous, and the testimony of the levers that he was not in the car."

"And against this," I said, "the police are holding a man who started in the car with Garner, who when arrested in his apartments after a lapse of ample time for him to have returned by cars from the scene of the crime, has blood spots on his coat and is laboring under stress of great excitement. Moreover, he has tacitly admitted the act, and makes no effort at an alibi. Our friends, the enemy, will call it a perfect chain of evidence."

"Yes, but perfect chains of evidence

Awful Conflict.

The scene that met my eyes was over in less than the time necessary to describe it, but it was thrilling while it lasted. Two men were locked in deadly embrace, reeling about the room, overturning tables and chairs, while a third circled around them watching for chance to administer the quietus with the butt of a pistol. The man in the embrace of the stranger was Clarke. The one with the pistol was the inspector. The stranger had a long knife in his right hand which he was trying to bring to bear on Clarke's anatomy, but I was pleased to note that the wrist of the hand that held the blade was encircled with four fingers and a thumb that I knew possessed a grip like a pipe-wrench.

The affair could have but one ending, and I did not see that I could be of any use. With one powerful effort Clarke brought his opponent's head within range of the butt of the inspector's revolver, there was a quick thud, and a limp form slipped out of his arms to the floor.

Despite the blood which ran down his face from the cut in his forehead, the grime, and the torn clothing and disheveled hair, I knew him from the pictures that filled the day's papers. It was Arthur Edgerton.

"What devil's trick is this you're playing on me, Mr. Clarke?" roared the inspector. "We left this man at the station not half an hour ago. How comes it that you lead me here in a false scent and then drag my own prisoner out of that room and force me to slug him?"

"I didn't lead you on a false scent.

Then He Met Her.

"Finally I met Miss Morrison, and I felt it was an epoch in my career. As I became better acquainted and the truth dawned on me that all my hopes of happiness were wrapped up in her, I realized, as never before, what a cruel burden my father had bequeathed me."

"I hesitated to tell Mazie of my family skeleton. I had no intention of deceiving her, and would have told her all before our marriage, but I sought to put off the evil day."

"I wouldn't have made the least bit of difference, dear," said Mrs. Edgerton, with an affectionate pressure of her husband's arm. "I would have married you if you had had a whole penitentiary full of wicked brothers."

"Before I asked Mazie to be my wife," Edgerton continued, "I called my brother into my office and made a compact with him. In consideration of a material increase in his allowance he was to leave Chicago and not return for five years. I earnestly hoped that before this time was up he would either drink himself to death or be killed in some brawl."

"He has always shown himself incapable of keeping his word, and I was scarcely surprised, when, on the day of the tragedy, he walked into my office. I was angry and lost my temper. I told him he never would get another cent out of me. At first he whined and begged, but when he saw I was firm he became furious and opened upon me a torrent of abuse. I ordered him to leave or I would kick him out."

"He went, vowing the most terrible vengeance against me. When I cooled down I was filled with remorse and felt that I had been untrue to my father's trust. But I reasoned

Edgerton's Story.

It was many months after these events that I first heard the connected story from Arthur Edgerton's own lips. Nothing came out at the trial, as Arnold was induced to plead guilty and accept a term of life imprisonment, there being little doubt that he was insane. Edgerton, the virtuous, lived in retirement until he could wind up his business affairs, when he and Miss Morrison were quietly married and departed to make their residence in Europe. The evening before they left they called at our apartments to express again their gratitude to Clarke for making their great happiness possible.

"I was born in Rio Janeiro," began Edgerton after, with some reluctance, he had consented to tell his story. "My brother followed me into the world a few hours later and our mother died at his birth. My father was the younger son of a titled English line and had settled in Brazil

to make his fortune, which he did most successfully, acquiring, in the course of time, an extensive ranch and large holdings of city property.

"We were the only children, and after our mother's death he devoted himself to our care with the assistance of a French governess and a Spanish housekeeper who presided over the large retinue of servants in our villa at beautiful Petropolis. Thus we acquired from infancy three languages. There have been a great help to Arnold in his villainy, though in the matter of education requiring application he is deficient."

"He early developed the very worst traits. At the age of five years he cut off the legs of the family cat with a hatchet just to see her hop, he said. By the time he was fifteen he was utterly beyond restraint. Our father repeatedly settled his gambling debts, paid forged bills, and spent large sums keeping him clear of the law. I am sure Arnold's escapades hastened his death, which occurred about five years ago. Everything was left to me with the understanding that I was to take up the burden for which our parents had both given their lives."

"I have performed this duty to the best of my ability. I closed up my father's affairs, sold off everything, and came here, thinking it might save Arnold to get him away from his evil associations, but wherever he is he made himself the lowest. I have made him a liberal allowance for his liberal, I fear—which he has squandered in debauchery in various cities, always returning to me when in need of money. In these moments he is master of all the arts of fawning."

"In his heart I knew he hated me because our father had not seen fit to divide his property between us, and he has repeatedly threatened my life."

"One of his choice methods of worrying me has been to impersonate me and call upon my friends, usually doing some act to disgrace me. You have seen the resemblance between us, and as I never mentioned to my friends that I had a twin brother, it was easy for him to impose on them. I have repaid many loans that I never borrowed, knowing it to be his work."

Conclusion of Story.

"It was a hopeless task to attempt to track him, so I went to the resort in Fourth avenue, where you found him and where I knew he would turn up some time during the night."

"Sure enough he came about 10 o'clock. He tried to pass it off as a joke, and said the machine had broken down, and he had left it at a garage near Lincoln Park. He said he was sorry for the scene he had made in my office, and that if I would give him money he would leave town that night, and never bother me again. I was so anxious to get rid of him that I was willing to agree to anything."

"At his request I changed coats with him as he showed me that he had greased from the auto all over the one of mine he had on. I did not guess that it was blood."

"I had scarcely returned to my apartments before I was arrested and charged with the murder. Then the whole, horrible truth flashed upon me. I thought of my brother speeding away from the city, and I registered an instant resolve to take his place."

"It occurred to me later that his first impulse on finding himself in possession of his ill-gotten booty and the money I had given him, would be a debauch, and then, hearing of my arrest and that I was disposed to shield him, he would lie low in his third of retreat until a safe opportunity presented to get away. So I felt pretty safe in telling Mr. Clarke where to find him."

"And just think, dear, you might have been convicted in his place if I hadn't come to Mr. Clarke," said Mrs. Edgerton, while her husband stopped to roll a cigarette in preference to those Clarke offered him. I noticed that he rolled it outward.

"I shouldn't have been convicted, dearest, as I could have established a good alibi, but the mystery would have been unsolved, I would have been ruined, and I doubt if you would have been willing to take my name. Mr. Clarke's way was by far the best. By the way, Clarke, I didn't want to tell you all at first, but when I looked into your eyes I knew I had to. Still you seemed to know it all, anyway. May I ask how you found out I had a brother?"

"You may thank Mrs. Edgerton's keenness of observation in noting your method of rolling a cigarette for the first tip. Then your brother's bungling work with the auto seemed to make it clear as a printed page. It only remained to persuade you to verify my theory."

"I think you could have done that any way. You have a remarkable power over men."

"And over women, too," said Mrs. Edgerton. "I wonder you have never married. It's lucky for Arthur that I met him."

Which shows that the best of women are at heart coquettes.

brick walls, guarded by many sentinels and mounted gendarmes, three small residences are situated, not much bigger than the average dwelling house of an ordinary landed proprietor. The largest of these is inhabited by the imperial family. The second is at the disposal of the empress dowager during her late not very frequent visits from Gatchina. The third, The Farm, indeed deserves its name, being an old peasant house, fitted up so that it may serve as an abode for the imperial family.

It was first used when after some of the imperial children had been suffering from measles the larger residence had to be disinfected and replastered. The whole family then for a time moved across to The Farm, where the little convalescents speedily recovered their strength. The stay here so charmed the children that year by year now one or the other of the girls pleads feeling ill, and entreats her parents to go for a few days to The Farm, which had proved to be such a wonderfully health restoring place. I have been told that the request is occasionally granted. But the Czar and Czarina are really delighted to have an excuse for staying for some days in the small, cozy rooms of the quaint old farmhouse and forgetting for a while the cares and responsibilities of their exalted positions.

EARTH'S AGES.

Geologists divide the record of the earth's development into five periods:

- 1-The Archean, lifeless and dawn of life.
- 2-The Paleozoic (ancient life), which was the age of fishes, coal plants, and invertebrates.
- 3-The Mesozoic (middle life), which was the age of reptiles.
- 4-The Cenozoic (recent life), which was the age of mammals.
- 5-The Quaternary, the age in which man's first appearance is indicated.

Czar and Czarina Exist in Fear

When on New Year Day, 1906, the assaulting gun on the Peter-Paul fortress "by a mistake" fired ball cartridge against the winter palace the Czar and his family left their capital for good, and took up their residence at Tsarskoe-Selo. Since then only on two occasions, writes E. W. Norrstrand, in the London Daily Mail, have they visited St. Petersburg, and then only for a few hours—at the opening of the first duma and at the consecration of the cathedral built in memory of Alexander II on the spot where he was murdered.

Tsarskoe-Selo is situated on the Baltic railway half an hour by train from St. Petersburg. Immense, beautifully kept parks surround the palace, with magnificent old trees and gorgeous shrubs, with dainty snow-white pavilions and fine works of sculpture and beautiful terraces and colonnades. Close to the palace is a great lake with richly wooded shores, and a most picturesque little island, on which a pavilion, modeled as a Greek temple, gleams out radiantly white among the luxurious, vivid green foliage. The palace is a stately construction, in late Italian renaissance style, built by Catherine II. It is, however, only used on state occasions, at official dinners or banquets. The imperial family as a rule lives at a much smaller palace called the Alexandrovski.

In May the court moves to Peterhof, on the Finnish bay, and stays there till autumn. Here also there are vast, magnificent parks, extending the whole way to Oranienbaum, right opposite Cronstadt. The great palace in Peterhof, built by Peter the Great and considerably enlarged by Catherine II, is situated on a low ridge running parallel to the coast line at a few hundred yards distance. Peterhof is chiefly renowned for its water works and fountains, which are built on a larger scale than those of Versailles and far beauty and effectiveness more than rival them.

In a corner of the park, right on the shores of the sea, sheltered behind tall